



Royal Academy of Music.

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**REPORT**

OF THE

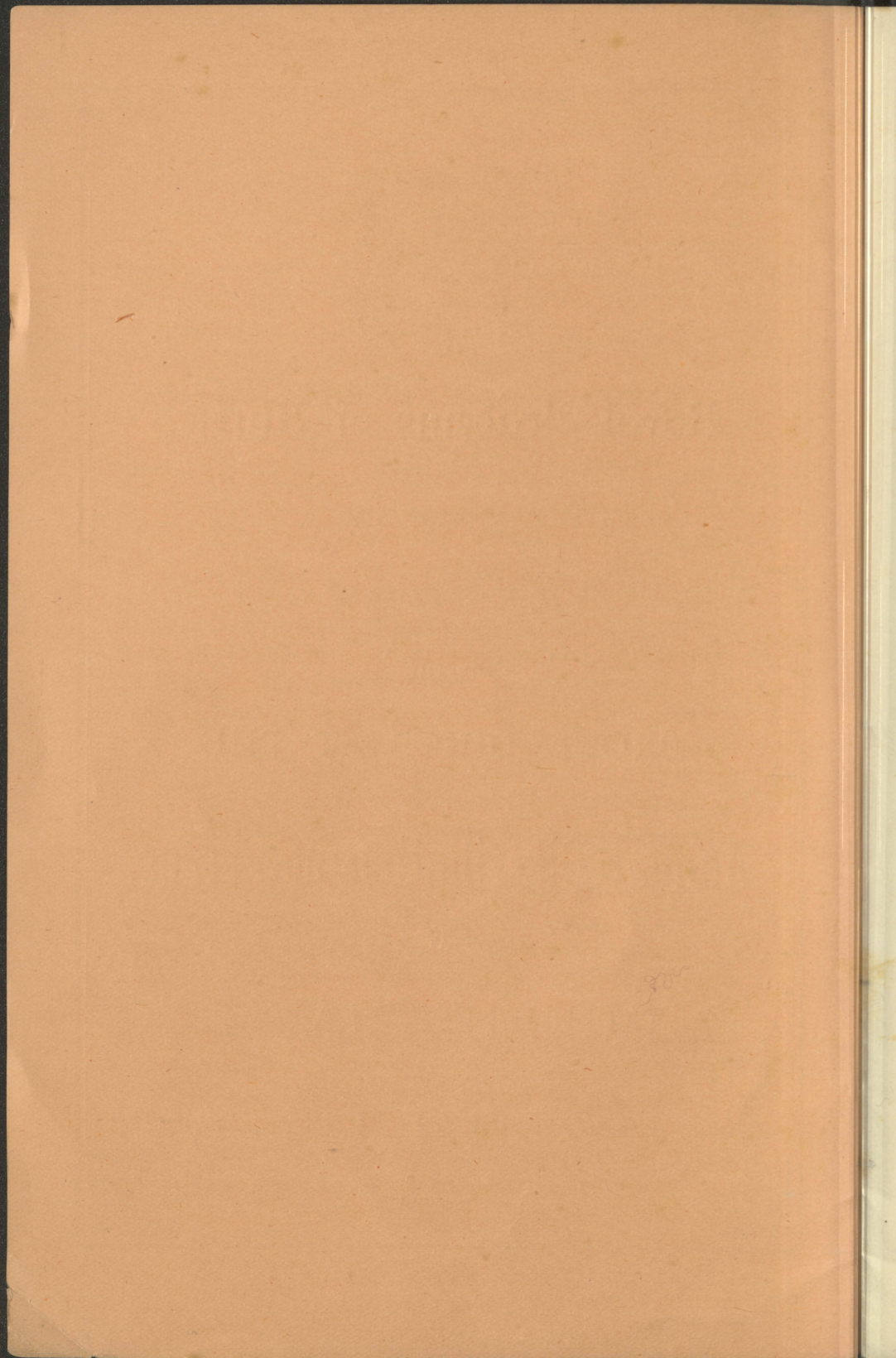
PROCEEDINGS AT THE

Annual Distribution of Prizes,

AT

QUEEN'S HALL,

*21st JULY, 1899.*







# Royal Academy of Music.

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## ANNUAL PRIZE DISTRIBUTION, 1899.

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THE prizes gained during the past year by the students of the Royal Academy of Music were distributed at the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, on Friday, July 21, 1899, by the Countess of Radnor. Among those present were Sir Benjamin Baker, Sir Alexander C. Mackenzie (the Principal), Lady and Miss Mackenzie, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, Mr. F. Corder, Mr. Ludovic Goetz, Mr. Walter Macfarren, Cav<sup>e</sup> A. Randegger, Dr. C. Steggall, Mr. John Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. Fred. Walker, Mr. Battison Haynes, Mr. Stewart Macpherson, Mr. Walter Mackway, Mr. W. Fitton, Mr. A. E. Izard, Mr. B. Albert, Mr. Frederic King, Mr. Francis Korbay, Madame A. Larkcom, Mr. Arthur Thompson, Cav<sup>e</sup> C. Albanesi, Mr. W. Kuhe, Mr. and Mrs. Tobias Matthay, Mr. C. F. Reddie, Mr. and Mrs. Schloesser, Mr. and Mrs. Webbe, Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Rose, Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Betjemann, Mr. A. Burnett, Mr. A. Gibson, M. and Madame Sauret, Mr. A. Pezze, Mr. B. L. Farjeon, Mr. B. Soutten, Mr. and Mrs. H. Lesingham, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Renaut, and Mr. William Farren. There was also, as usual, a large attendance of the students and their relatives and friends.

On her arrival at the hall Lady Radnor was received by members of the governing bodies, and was presented by Miss Sybil Hutton, the youngest student, with a splendid bouquet in R.A.M. colours.

Prior to the distribution of prizes, a selection of music was given by the students, the Principal conducting the Choir and Mr. E. Sauret the Ensemble Class. An address was afterwards delivered by the Principal.

SIR A. C. MACKENZIE said : Lady Radnor, ladies and gentlemen,—Your well-known gifts as a very active lover of music must easily put you in sympathetic touch with the young musicians of the Academy. I shall feel grateful if you will extend a little of that sympathy to its Principal, when he asks you, in accordance with “use and wont,” to listen for a brief space of time to a condensed statement of the events of the past year. I have not even the advantage of making my short recital a dramatic one ; there are no incidents of a thrilling or startling nature to lend any romantic interest to the simple record of the exertions of my colleagues the Professors, and the consequent results produced upon the students. I may say it from my present “coign of vantage” (that is, neither to their faces nor behind their backs) that we may congratulate ourselves not only upon much of their artistic endeavour, but also upon the cheerful disposition of our students to uphold, to (in commercial language) carry forward the discipline, the family and home-like social order which has become traditional here, and which has helped so much to make the Academy the pleasant school of music it is. (Cheers.) I am, alas, but rarely permitted to address this annual meeting without having to make painful reference to some event, which time, in its course, teaches us to expect, but never fully prepares us for. Thus, we have had to part with one of the kindest and most genial advisers and friends the Academy has ever had at any period of its existence. I speak, I *must* speak of the gentle firmness, the sagacity, the never-failing interest he invariably displayed when his frequent presence encouraged and honoured us. His amiable character, not less than his great



intellectual gifts are universally known, and it would ill become me to say more about so distinguished a man as our late Vice-President, Lord Justice Chitty. Hard at the heels of this blow came the news of the unexpected death of another influential and highly valued Vice-President, Lord Herschell, who, amid all his engrossing national work, would always find leisure for music, its schools, its interests, and who took a very prominent share in the government of this Institution, and has taken personal part on several occasions similar to this. It seems only a little while ago that he took his seat at one of our concerts (at which he was a frequent attender), saying to me: "I've slipped away from the House to hear a little music; I hope I shall not be wanted." We can only think with deep respect and admiration of those two eminently prominent men, whom we were very proud to number among our most active well-wishers. From the ranks of our Professors we miss the face of one who was, unfortunately for us, stricken down a short time after his appointment, and was, therefore, not so well known to the students as his talents would have made him had we been permitted to retain his valuable services. Although in feeble health, Mr. Franco Novara, however, gave them to us almost to the very last. Happily I may now turn to brighter and more encouraging matter. Certain vacant chairs have been filled by six gentlemen familiar in our little world as lovers of music, and whose presence on the Board of Directors will prove of great benefit to the Institution to which they have generously agreed to act as advisers. These are the Right Honourable Lord Justice Henn Collins, Sir Benjamin Baker, K.C.M.G., LL.D., F.R.S., Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Collins, C.B., M.V.O., W. P. Mills, Esq., and W. Hugh Spottiswoode, Esq.; while a vacancy in the Committee of Management, caused by the retirement of a real friend, who leaves that body only to continue his services as a Director—I allude to Mr. Edmund Macrory, Q.C.—has been filled by a notable patron of art in the person of Mr. George Donaldson. Additions to the staff of Professors are the surest signs of the increase of our requirements, for we pursue the plan of inviting new teachers to join us



only as necessity arises. To-day I have to point to no less than three ladies, as the familiar phrase runs, "of our choice." The Shakespearian quotation anent the flower "under any other name," and so on, hardly holds good in this particular instance, for however sweet may be her vocal efforts under the name of Rose, she is popularly supposed to sing even more sweetly as Miss Clara Samuell. (Cheers.) There are two others whose advent will be hailed with great pleasure by their fellow students, for they step straight out of their ranks to become Professors. It is true that they owe their experience, and therefore their appointments, to the excellent work already done by them as sub-professors of elocution for some time. They are both vocalists, and are therefore able to apply directly and specially the art of elocution to that of singing. I have had frequent occasion to mention their names as being on the honours list. They are quite familiar to all—Miss Katie Thomas and Miss Annie Child. (Cheers.) Those have to be supplemented by the names of Mr. J. B. McEwen, also a clever ex-student, and of Dr. Greenish as Professors of harmony and composition, as well as of Mr. Betjemann, who, in addition to his labours as Director of the operatic class, will further assist us as Professor of the violin. Finally, Signor Luigi Denza, the well-known teacher of singing, and another past student and organist of renown, Mr. E. H. Lemare. (Cheers.) The mention of this latter appointment reminds me that we shall henceforth be in a position to do greater justice to our students of the king of instruments. I might say "The king is dead; long live the king." The Professors of the organ will, I know, be deeply grieved when I tell them that they have taken a long last farewell of the instrument which has done so much good service in its time. But I hope that among the first functions to take place after our return to work will be the opening of a new organ, capable of meeting all modern requirements, and which is now being built for us by one whose name is a guarantee of excellence of workmanship, who has met our views in a liberal spirit—Father Willis. (Cheers.) Nor are our endeavours to cope with the



limitations of space which persistently hamper us entirely futile, for we have been able to make additional provision for the largest number of students the Academy has ever had to find accommodation for—540—by the acquisition of new and spacious rooms, which have already been at our disposal during part of the past term. The library, too, is practically new as regards space and internal arrangements; and I am told that there are hopes—presumably well-founded—that its custodian will have in print (perhaps before London presents the appearance described in Mr. Wells' prophetic book "When the Sleeper wakes") the long expected catalogue. And the public performances of the operatic and dramatic classes have been for the same obvious reasons removed from our concert-room to St. George's Hall. For all of these reliefs much thanks. In close connection with these welcome changes, I must refer to another much less agreeable change in my own personal surroundings which touches me very nearly indeed. We must lose the invaluable services of one who has for thirteen years excelled in the performance of many difficult and most important duties, who has held, with credit and honour to himself and great satisfaction to all, what may be truthfully described as one of the most delicate and diplomatic offices here. I have lived in almost hourly contact with him for eleven years without even the suggestion of a temporary disagreement—a fact reflecting much credit upon both of us—(laughter)—and I would take this opportunity of testifying to the integrity, the fair-mindedness and clear-sightedness of the gentleman who will, I regret to say, cease very soon to bear the title of "Assistant to the Principal." Mr. Thomas Knott is, however, to be congratulated on the reason which causes him to quit my room as a permanent lodger. I hope I have treated my tenant well. Increasing professional work presses too heavily upon him to permit the retention of his onerous post. While we lose him in one capacity we gain him, however, in another, for Mr. Knott has been a Professor for some time, although his own sense of the fitness of things has prevented him from accepting pupils. A student of the Academy himself, he has



been connected with it as student and official for exactly twenty-one years; endowed with a perfectly prodigious memory for the most trifling circumstances which have occurred in this kaleidoscopic institution, to say that I view his compulsory retirement with regret would be to understate the case by many degrees. The appreciation of his worth by the Committee of Management is best expressed by the fact that, besides a more substantial, if still inadequate gift, they will recommend him to the Directors as a worthy recipient of the highest honour it is in our power to bestow on any student—namely, the Fellowship of the Academy. (Cheers.) I know that my friend, the Curator, joins me in offering our individual thanks to him. The Committee have been good enough to approve my nomination of another student to assist me. He will have no easy task to follow his predecessor's footsteps—there is much to be learned before he can do so—but I doubt not that every endeavour in this direction will be made by Mr. Welton Hickin—(cheers)—whom the Committee will also recommend to the Directors for the honour of an Associateship. Before requesting your Ladyship to proceed with the distribution of prizes, I would like to explain briefly the system that regulates their bestowal. Let me at once say that large though the number be this year, every one of them has been well-earned. Of the twenty-six special and memorial prizes I need say no more than this. They are founded by patrons of our art, and the Academy acts merely in an administrative capacity in respect of them. They have been adjudicated on in nearly all cases by artists independent of the school, who have in many instances spoken in the highest terms of the excellent performances at the competitions, and the consequent difficulty of performing their duty as judges. (Cheers.) With regard to the Academy awards proper, let me remind our friends that competition does *not* enter into the question. Their number is determined by three factors—(1), the large number of students; (2), the still larger number of subjects studied; and (3), the standard attained. Every individual student has his or her curriculum (averaging four subjects at least), and is examined in every branch of it. A high and



constantly rising standard is exacted by a special Board of Examiners in each subject, and if the standard is reached, of course, the award is made. If, then, the requirements are met by a large proportion of those examined, surely that is a matter for congratulation to all concerned. Indeed, there are some subjects of study in which I should welcome an increase in the rewards. Harmony and sight-singing and reading are studies obligatory on all our students, and in each of them about 400 out of our 540 pupils were eligible. Yet I find that in the one case only fourteen, and in the other only forty-seven awards are made; and even in that most attractive study, pianoforte playing, not more than about 33 per cent. of the pupils will receive prizes to-day. Please let me deal first with three prizes, the recipients of which have to be selected by myself. I do not feel any elation when I say "Alone I did it," because the selection involves a great responsibility where so many, and often nearly equal claims have to be weighed. The condition attached to the Worshipful Company of Musicians' Medal, which through the generosity of that Corporation falls to us this year, is not easily satisfied—"To the most distinguished student." The winner of this most valuable testimony of merit is an exemplary and diligent student, who has done excellent work in divers branches, and has also proved his claim to hold the Goring Thomas Scholarship by writing a two-act opera of much promise, besides confirming my choice, since it was made, by taking the Charles Lucas Prize for composition. (Cheers.) He can also pass his elements examination easily at the same time. I am not dazzled by the brilliance of my students' compositions, if that fact is not within my knowledge—Harry Farjeon. Next in order is the Dove Prize: "To the student who shall have distinguished himself or herself in general excellence, assiduity, and industry," which I allot to a female student, who, in my opinion, may lay claim to these attributes, since she has already made an impression outside the Academy walls as a vocalist with a future, has proved an energetic worker, never absent

from her duties, and is always willing to add to them when called upon to do so—Miss Ethel Wood. Finally, there is the Ridley Prentice Prize to be given “to that sub-Professor who shall have obtained the best results in teaching,” and here I name Mr. Claude Pollard. Honours which come from other outside sources have fallen pretty freely among our students. Thus the important Travelling Scholarship known as the “Mendelssohn” has been secured by an ex-student, who begins his search for further experience in Vienna shortly—Mr. Percy Hilder Miles. (Cheers.) So, too, the prize in memory of the distinguished tenor, Joseph Maas, has been gained by Mr. Whitworth Mitton. (Cheers.) Miss Agnes Zimmermann’s repeated reward for good sight-reading was divided herself between Miss Ethel Cave and Miss Elsie Horne. (Cheers.) The Robert Burns Club Prize for composition of lyrics by that poet was also divided between Mr. Neville Flux and Mr. Harry Farjeon. (Cheers.) The first award of the Swansea Eisteddfod Prize falls to a Welshwoman, Miss Gertrude Drinkwater. (Cheers.) And within the last few days a new annual prize has been founded by Miss Julia Leney, of Torquay, for the encouragement of the study of her instrument, the harp, and which will, I hope, be adjudged for many years to come by Mr. John Thomas, in whose honour it has been instituted. (Cheers.) I have exhausted my budget, I hope not my hearers. But before retiring, I wish to express our regret, as well as his own, which he has bade me to convey to your Ladyship and the company assembled, at the enforced absence of our genial and generous friend, Mr. Thomas Threlfall, who year by year imposes a heavier debt of gratitude upon us for his labours in the double chairmanship of our Committee and that of the Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music. In each of those chairs he exercises a control which is characterised by gentleness and good nature, tempered by an adamant firmness which on occasion fills me particularly with respectful awe. (Laughter.) His liberality is proverbial here, and I know that



his heart is with us now. (Cheers.) There is another who shines by reason of his rare capacity for work in the divided rôle of Honorary Treasurer of this Institution and Honorary Secretary of the Associated Board. There is, unfortunately perhaps for us, a limit to his duties in the former office. I sometimes wish that his duties with regard to the receipt of donations and subscriptions were too heavy for one Treasurer to undertake without assistance, and that such generous bequests as that of the late Mr. John North, who left the handsome sum of £365 to this grateful Academy, were of more frequent occurrence. But there are seemingly no such limits to the ever-growing demands upon Mr. Aitken's energies in the last-named office, and we have to assure him of our unstinted recognition of his invaluable services in the dual occupations to which he so willingly subjects himself. (Cheers.) Let me now take quick leave of our scholars and friends here, who will, I believe, while making holiday, give more than a passing thought to us and our dutiful endeavours towards them. If I read their faces aright those memories will not be unhappy ones, even for the few among them who are aware that their day of studentship has closed and may not be recalled. Among so large a number there must of necessity be many variations of talent and temperament—some upon whom success will wait, some who may have to wait patiently for prosperity. But in every case you who leave us will become in a double sense your own masters, and will have to train yourselves to be your own teachers in future. The educational policy of the Academy, and I cannot say it often enough, is not to breed mere specialists, but to allow its students an opportunity of knowing all music which has a rightful claim to be studied in a modern music school. And the programmes in which you have assisted so often, both in the public halls and in our own concert-room, ranging, as they do, from Bach to Tschaiikowsky—or, to reverse the natural order, from music of the highest culture to that of the noble savage—(laughter and cheers)—prove that we have moved in no restricted or narrow grooves. You have, therefore, been in a position to cultivate and adopt a standard of



taste which must assist you to form the taste of others on a similar liberal and broad-minded scale. For that is in the power of all of you, if, indeed, it be not an important duty in the professional life upon which you are now about to enter. Wherever your lines may fall—whether in the remoter places or in the greater centres—you need not expect to be able to “give out” knowledge if you omit to continue to take it in; in other words, to follow keenly the movements, the tendencies, and changes to which our art is, perhaps, more subject than any of her other sisters. Your school could hardly have kept itself in the forefront for seventy-seven years had it remained motionless, or had been permitted to stagnate. Some of us, its pilots and governors, not infrequently receive much well-meant advice, coming, I have noticed, generally from those who have rarely been within our walls, and are therefore eminently qualified to judge of our doings. (Laughter.) You who have, one might say, lived with us, happen to be equally well-informed and need hardly go much farther for an example of activity (should a reminder be required at any time) than your Alma Mater herself. Long continued occupation, keenness of interest in the respective branches of the art we endeavour to serve, seems to have the faculty of preserving youthful animation, if one may judge by the vigorous personalities of some of my colleagues, such as Mr. Walter Macfarren, Mr. William Farren, and a good many others I might mention if I cared to run the risks consequent upon any suggestion that their arrival at majority is not of quite recent date. (Laughter.) Yes, in spite of the one trouble which affects us at all seriously—namely, a chronic accumulation of deficiency of space, a disorder which might easily be cured if we had to complain of a corresponding congestion of the Academy purse—I believe that breezy Tenterden Street is rapidly acquiring fame as a most desirable health resort—(laughter)—for the cure of low spirits—for the prolongation of life generally, both artistic and material. And I confess to attaching almost as much importance to the hope that you may have caught something of the cheerful manner in which the instruction



has been given there as to the comprehensiveness, the usefulness of the teaching itself. If you display some of the energy we have tried to associate with your recollections of us, there need be little fear of the kind of impression you will make upon those who may have the success of your future public life in their hands. I have no further designs on your patience. Most of you, unable to resist the magnetic influence we have over you, will willingly submit to its attractions again. Be that as it may, the favour of the old school and our personal friendly wishes precede the good fortune which I sincerely trust will speedily overtake them. (Cheers.) You, Lady Radnor, who have so amiably consented to grace our farewell function—a kind act, for which we are exceedingly indebted—are, as all here know, a trained musician, an orchestral chieftainess yourself, well accustomed to direct such a body as this. I will now place my band and chorus at your disposal. Under your experienced guidance they will, I know, answer readily to your hand, nor forget—this time, at least, I'll warrant—to keep their eyes on the conductor. (Cheers.)

The COUNTESS OF RADNOR then distributed the prizes, after which

SIR BENJAMIN BAKER said: Ladies and gentlemen,—In the absence of a more experienced and more worthy Director, the Principal has imposed upon me the very pleasant, very easy, and I may say very popular duty of proposing a vote of thanks to the Countess of Radnor for her kindness in distributing the prizes to-day. (Cheers.) You have heard from the opening remarks of the Principal that I am one of the newest Directors—I am a very new Director—but I am a very old attendant at the Students' Concerts. At the same time, this is the first occasion on which I have ever been present at a distribution of prizes, and it has been an extremely interesting and extremely pretty sight to witness the accomplishments and the enthusiasm of the future generation of musicians. (Cheers.) Lady Radnor is known to most of us as a sincere lover of our art, and also an experienced practical musician, and one who has rendered

great services to the musical profession. (Cheers.) You will agree with me that not the least of these services are those which she has so gracefully performed to-day in distributing the prizes; and therefore I will ask you, without any further words, to join with me in a hearty vote of thanks to the Countess of Radnor for the work she has done for you to-day. (Cheers.)

The vote was accorded by acclamation.

The COUNTESS OF RADNOR, in reply, expressed her warm thanks for the kindness with which she had been received. Her Ladyship afterwards addressed the students, on whom she impressed the importance of good work, and urged them to work on with the assurance that they would be rewarded in the end.



